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Focus on Wellness moves to monthly publication

Focus on Wellness is moving to a monthly publication schedule. Starting this month, Frankfort's own wellness information source will post on the first Wednesday of each month.



CHFS' various health programs will provide current and informative articles as part of the Worksite Wellness Program initiatives.

Remember this week is...

National & State Suicide Prevention Week (Sept. 4-10)

World Suicide Prevention Day is Sept. 10

The Aug. 22, CHFS Focus provides more information on the Kentucky Suicide Prevention Group and this week's suicide prevention conference at

<http://chfs.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/8882D914-D77B-418F-9A3F-176E1D76EF43/0/CHFSFocusPrint082205.pdf>.

Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month September 2005

Contact: Missy Adkisson, 564-9358

Of all female reproductive cancers, ovarian cancer gets the dubious honor of being the deadliest. Known to many as the "silent killer," ovarian cancer shows few, if any, signs and symptoms in its early stages. Once symptoms are detectable, it is often in its advanced stages and very difficult to treat. Too often, treatment is ineffective and the chances for long-term survival become grim. But this need not always be the case. September is nationally proclaimed Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month in an effort to raise women's awareness of this deadly disease and improve their knowledge of risk factors and

Risk Factors for Ovarian Cancer

- Have a mother, sister or daughter with ovarian cancer;
- Are over 50;
- Have a mother, sister or daughter with breast cancer, or you've had breast cancer yourself;
- Test positive for the BRCA 1 or BRCA 2 genetic tests for breast cancer.

early warning signs. As with all cancers, the best way to treat ovarian cancer is to detect it early. With one in 57 women eventually diagnosed with ovarian cancer, raising awareness is imperative to fighting this battle.

Unlike other reproductive cancers, there is no routine screening test available for ovarian cancer as a woman's ovaries lie deep within the pelvis, making it difficult to screen. Trans-vaginal ultrasounds may detect tumors of the ovaries and the CA-125 blood test can be used to help make a diagnosis, but neither test is foolproof nor are they "routinely" performed at gynecological visits. While most women receive their annual mammogram and Pap test to screen for breast cancer and cervical cancer respectively, the same is not true for ovarian cancer. Yet statistics tell us that ovarian cancer is the deadliest of all women's reproductive cancers and is the fifth leading cause of cancer death among women. Screening for ovarian cancer should become a personal priority for women with risk factors or women who are concerned about the disease. Most importantly, consult your physician to evaluate your risks and help reduce your chances of developing ovarian cancer.

Early Symptoms of Ovarian Cancer

- An unusual feeling of fullness or discomfort in the pelvic region;
- Unexplainable indigestion, gas, or bloating that is not relieved with over-the-counter antacids;
- Pain during sexual intercourse;
- Abnormal bleeding;
- Swelling and pain of the abdomen.

It is important to note that most often these symptoms do not indicate ovarian cancer. Check with your doctor if you experience any of these symptoms.

September is National Cholesterol Education Month

Contact: Brian Boisseau, 564-7996, ext. 3823

The Kentucky Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program wants you to know your cholesterol numbers. Heart disease claims more lives per year than any other disease, and high cholesterol is one of the main risk factors.



The first step in controlling your cholesterol is to know what your numbers are. First, you will need to make an appointment with your health care provider to get a fasting lipid profile. This profile will tell you your total

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cholesterol level, your good (HDL) cholesterol level, your bad (LDL) cholesterol level and your triglyceride level.

Ideally, one should have a total cholesterol level no greater than 200 mg/dL. Good cholesterol should be over 40 mg/dL, and bad cholesterol should be lower than 130 mg/dL. Triglycerides should not exceed 150 mg/dL. If yours is higher, discuss your options to lower it with your health care provider.

If you find that you have high cholesterol, don't panic. You can take many measures to lower it, such as reducing the amount of saturated fat in your diet. This may mean cutting down on some foods like high fat meats, cheeses or desserts. You can also increase your intake of fresh vegetables and fish. Preparation can hold the key to lowering cholesterol, so be careful not to use a lot of salad dressing or butter when preparing these foods. Oils such as olive or canola are good substitutions for other fats when cooking.

Getting more exercise can also help lower your cholesterol. Increasing your physical activity is a proven way to improve cholesterol naturally. You should try to get 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity five days a week. This can include bike riding and brisk walking. The 30-minute per day recommendation can also be broken down to three 10 minute segments throughout the day. This can help those who feel pressed for time. Losing and maintaining weight is another benefit to exercise, which will also help lower cholesterol. It is always a good idea to talk to your health care provider about any health concerns you have before beginning an exercise routine.

In some circumstances, no amount of physical activity or alteration of diet can make cholesterol go down. Age and heredity can play a major role in determining who gets high cholesterol and who doesn't. If you are one who does, talk to your health care provider about other options available to lower your cholesterol.

Smoking can also work with cholesterol to harden the arteries and cause heart disease earlier in life in some individuals. If you smoke, talk to your health care provider or local health department about quitting. Programs are available to help you quit, and many are no cost or low cost. In Kentucky, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW for more information.

For more information about National Cholesterol Education Month, please visit the following Web site:
http://hin.nhlbi.nih.gov/cholesterolmonth/cholesterol_kit.htm.

Managing Your Asthma

Contact: Tricia McLendon,
564-7996, ext. 3819

Information adapted from the American Lung Association, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

Asthma affects an estimated one in 10 Kentuckians, and is the most common long-term disease of children. It causes a person's airways to become smaller, resulting in attacks of wheezing, shortness of breath, chest tightness and coughing. While asthma symptoms are similar to those of chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder, or COPD, persons with COPD usually have a cough and severe shortness of breath on a continuous basis. COPD is not caused by exposure to certain triggers.

Exposure to asthma triggers causes an asthma attack. The most common asthma triggers are secondhand smoke, dust mites, outdoor air pollution, cockroach allergen, pet dander, mold and pollen. Other triggers include infections, food allergies, vigorous exercise, stress, strong odors and cold weather.

One of the most important things you can do to prevent an asthma attack is to identify your triggers and avoid them. To manage your asthma, you should also do the following:

- Make regular visits to your healthcare provider
- Take your long-term medication regularly
- Develop a written asthma management plan that identifies your asthma medications, your triggers and what to do during an asthma attack

Your asthma may not be under control if you:

- Use a rescue inhaler more than twice a week for asthma symptoms
- Wake up at night with asthma symptoms more than twice a month
- Refill rescue medications more than twice a year

Asthma can be more common during peak allergy months, which are during the spring and fall in Kentucky. As children head back to school, parents should:



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- Obtain an up-to-date written asthma management plan from the child's health care provider and give a copy to the school nurse and/or day care provider.
- Make sure the child has asthma rescue medications, holding chambers and peak flow meters for both home and school.
- Make sure the child has access to his/her asthma medications and knows how to use them.
- Minimize the child's exposure to things that could trigger an asthma attack, such as dust mites, secondhand smoke, mold and pet dander.
- Schedule a flu shot appointment with the child's health care provider when the vaccine is available.

For more information, visit the American Lung Association of Kentucky Web site at <http://www.kylung.org>, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/asthma/default.htm>, or the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Web site at <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/>.

Opportunities for Success

Contact: Jill Pfankuch, 564-7194

Seventy-five percent of our health care costs and over two-thirds of premature deaths are caused by chronic diseases attributed to poor nutrition, tobacco use and physical inactivity. Even with an increased awareness of the importance of physical activity and good nutrition, a recent report from the Trust for



America's Health indicates that obesity rates have worsened in all states except Oregon. It's not completely surprising. The difficulties associated with increasing physical activity, improving eating habits and quitting smoking have been well documented. Despite the challenges associated with making lifestyle changes, the opportunity for success is always present.

One disease particularly associated with too little physical activity, poor nutrition, and overweight and obesity is Type 2 diabetes. This form of diabetes is most commonly diagnosed in adults, but is now, unfortunately, being increasingly seen in children. The good news is that

lifestyle changes can prevent or delay the onset of Type II diabetes among high-risk adults. Additionally, healthy eating and daily physical activity are routinely prescribed as part of a comprehensive program to manage Type II diabetes. Shirley Wilson, who works in the Division of Child Care in DCBS, knows firsthand how important lifestyle changes are for managing Type II diabetes.

Diagnosed two years ago, Wilson remembers being surprised to learn she has Type II diabetes. "I'm not sure why, as I had several of the risk factors (overweight, sedentary lifestyle, my father had Type I diabetes and died when I was 12, etc.). At first I felt that I couldn't manage this. I didn't know if I would be able to make the necessary changes." Although overwhelmed with this new information, Shirley knew that it was time to take action. "My thoughts drastically changed very quickly."

On the day of diagnosis, her glucose or blood sugar reading was 277 (the recommended range is 65-109). Through a combination of light exercise, healthy eating and medication, her glucose readings are now only slightly higher in the mornings, but well within range the remainder of the day. "Diabetes is not curable, only manageable. It will never go away, but you certainly can control it. I have lost a good deal of weight, and I am slowly losing more. I probably eat less than 30 carbohydrates a day, but I eat very well. My diet is rich in salmon, chicken, steak, pork loin, but also asparagus, eggplant, broccoli, squash and any other veggie I can get my hands on. My cholesterol has dropped from 241 to 157. My triglycerides are 62 and my blood pressure is about 100/60," Wilson said.

"I am careful to say though, that it is not a diet, but a way to live. I don't feel deprived at all. I go to any restaurant I want and I am always able to find something within my dietary guidelines."

These lifestyle changes have had an enormous impact on Shirley's quality of life. "I was very ill for at least two years prior to my diagnosis. I felt bad every day of my life. I feel grateful to have been able to get my health under control so quickly. Every day is a gift. I compare my ability to control diabetes as I presume an alcoholic would view not drinking. I always know that temptation is readily available. I have to depend on what I have learned about the dangers of diabetes to remind me of why I now am able to strive for a healthier lifestyle."

What advice would Shirley give to others trying to make lifestyle changes? "Just jump in. When I changed my diet, I began to reap many benefits. I began losing weight, the glucose dropped, the cholesterol and other levels dropped, and I feel better than I have felt in years." Shirley Wilson's

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story is a classic example of someone turning an enormous challenge into a successful accomplishment. Hopefully, her experience will inspire us to take advantage of our own opportunities for success.

If you would be interested in participating in an on-site diabetes support group, please contact the CHFS Wellness Program Coordinator at jill.pfankuch@ky.gov

More about diabetes:

- Diabetes in Kentucky has increased over 50 percent since 1994 and is responsible for over 96,000 hospitalizations each year.
- It is the sixth leading cause of death in Kentucky.
- Type II diabetes accounts for up to 90 percent of all cases of diabetes and is associated with older age, obesity, family history, history of diabetes during pregnancy, impaired glucose metabolism, physical inactivity and race/ethnicity.

To learn more about diabetes and to assess your risk, go to www.diabetes.org.

Special thanks to Shirley Wilson for sharing her story in hopes of helping others. If you know of an employee who has been successful at losing weight, increasing physical activity, improving nutrition, quitting smoking or other healthy change, please contact the CHFS Wellness Program Coordinator at jill.pfankuch@ky.gov

The CHFS Worksite Wellness Program Wants to Hear From You

Don't Forget!

Have you completed the CHFS Worksite Wellness Employee Interest Survey? The information you share will help the wellness program provide effective and useful initiatives and programs. The survey can be found at

<http://oit.chfsnet.ky.gov/sites/Wellness/Survey/Lists/Employees%20Interest%20Survey/overview.aspx>.

Please complete by Friday, Sept. 16.



National Women's Health and Fitness Day, Sept. 28

"Fitness...A Style for Life!"

National Women's Health and Fitness Day is the nation's largest health promotion event for women of all ages. The major focus of the day is on the importance of physical activity and health awareness for women. Set for Sept. 28, the day provides an opportunity for health clubs, worksites, organizations, schools, churches and other community groups to participate and focus their efforts on improving the health status of the women they represent. Activities can be as unique as the organization itself, and may include walking, exercise demonstrations, health screenings and health information.



To promote National Women's Health and Fitness Day at CHFS, the Division of Women's Physical and Mental Health will provide fun fitness opportunities all day. Beginning at 9 a.m., Wednesday, Sept. 28, various fitness demonstrations will be provided every hour throughout the day in the James Thompson Training Room located on the second floor of CHR, just behind the escalators. The demonstrations will include yoga, stretching, jazzercise, Pilates, line dancing and ballroom dancing. Employee participation is strongly encouraged as there will be lots of fun, along with trained instructors to lead the demos and answer questions. A finalized schedule of activities will be available soon. We hope this event will inspire individuals to find an activity they love and incorporate it into their lives. Beginning a fitness regimen can be a daunting task, but the Division of Women's Physical and Mental Health is committed to helping individuals get informed and get started on their path to better health.

Healthy Recipes Wanted!

Do you have a healthy recipe that you would like to share? Have you revised an old favorite to reduce fat and calories? Please share your healthy recipes for the Focus on Wellness. Send to jill.pfankuch@ky.gov.

Recipe	
Recipe Name	
Ingredients	
Instructions	